

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
2005 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY RESULTS
Executive Summary

In the spring of 2005, the Nevada Department of Education conducted its seventh statewide administration of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) as part of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System. The CDC uses this epidemiological surveillance system to measure the prevalence of priority health and safety behaviors that put youth at risk for significant health and social problems and to monitor progress toward achieving relevant national health objectives for the year 2010. The 2005 administration was the third in which the survey document included selected questions from the Nevada Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Student Survey along with core YRBS questions and the third time that middle school students were surveyed using a similar, age-appropriate document.

A total of 2,564 students in 83 public schools containing grades 9, 10, 11, or 12 were selected for participation in the 99-item, multiple choice high school YRBS. The school response rate was 97 percent and the student response rate, based on 1,556 usable questionnaires received from the sampled students, was 61 percent. The middle school sample included 7,818 students from 111 schools containing grades 6, 7, or 8 who responded to the 78-item middle school YRBS. A random sample of 2,967 surveys was drawn from these available district-level surveys to ensure that the final sample provided proportional representation of each of the state's 17 school districts. Survey administration procedures were designed to help protect the privacy and confidentiality of all participating students. Student participation was voluntary, and parent permission was obtained.

The data generated from the 1993 Nevada YRBS provided the first benchmark of the prevalence of certain risk behaviors practiced by Nevada adolescent youth. Subsequent YRBS results not only assess the prevalence of these behaviors but also provide a measure of the State's progress toward achieving relevant national health objectives for the year 2010. The students who participated in the high school survey are representative of students in Nevada. The results can be used to make important inferences concerning the health-risk behaviors of all Nevada public high school students in grades 9-12. While the CDC did not weight middle school results, the large sample size and the fact that the same CDC sampling procedures were followed, increases the likelihood that they are representative of middle school students throughout Nevada.

Goals Attained or Surpassed

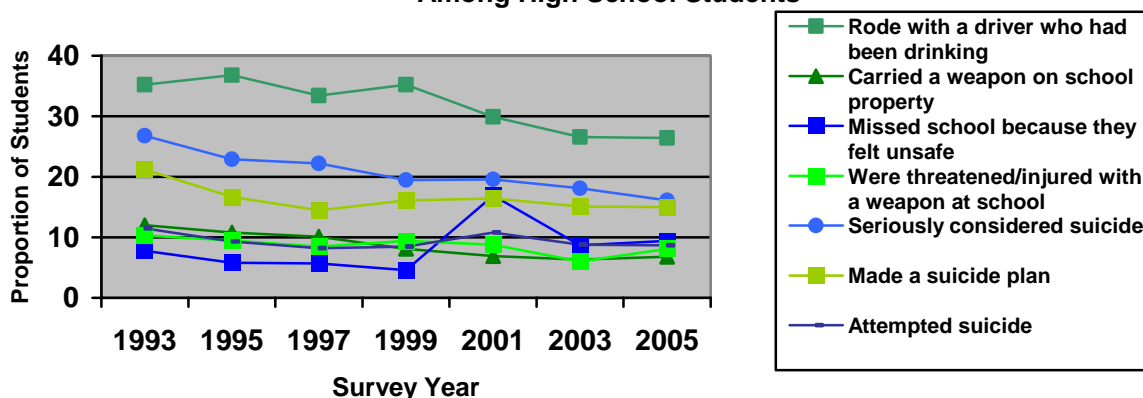
The proportions of Nevada students reporting the following desired behaviors currently **equal or exceed** the goals established in the national health objectives for the year 2010.

- The proportion of students reporting that they rode, during the last 30 days, with a driver who had been drinking alcohol was 20.4 percent at the middle school level and 26.4 percent at the high school level. (30% goal)
- The use of tobacco products in the past month was reported by 10.5 percent of middle school students and 20.7 percent of high school students. (21% goal)
- Cigarette smoking on one or more days in the past month was reported by 9.7 percent of middle school students. (16% goal)

Progress Recorded

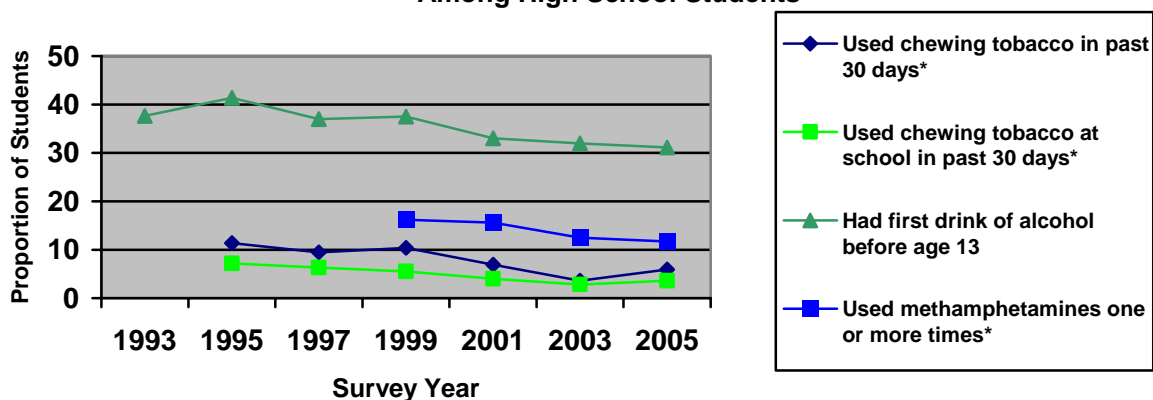
A trend analysis report generated by the CDC shows that significant positive changes have occurred over time in behaviors measured by eighteen of the standard High School YRBS questions from the Nevada YRBS. Trend lines grouped by behavior area are shown on the following pages. Positive changes in middle school behaviors within each category are noted where appropriate.

Significant Changes in Injury and Violence-Related Behaviors Among High School Students



Among middle school students, the percentage of students reporting that they always wear a seat belt when riding in a car increased from 39.6 percent in 2001 to 46.6 percent in 2005.

Significant Changes in Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Drug Use Among High School Students



At the high school level, only the question on age of first drink has data available for all seven survey years. Blanks for a given question or year signify that weighted data were not available for that year or that the question was not asked.

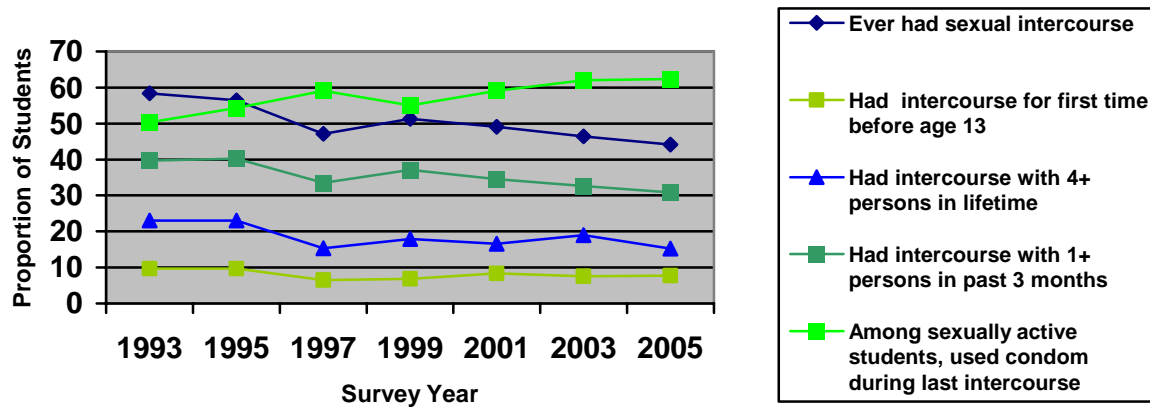
At the middle school level, the proportions of students reporting tobacco use declined as follows:

- Ever tried smoking dropped from 36.5 percent in 2001 to 29 percent in 2005.
- Smoked first cigarette before age 13 fell from 19.5 percent in 2001 to 14.3 percent in 2005.
- Current smoking declined from 13 percent in 2001 to 9.7 percent in 2005.
- Friends who use tobacco daily dropped from 32.8 percent in 2001 to 29.7 percent in 2005.

Positive changes in alcohol and other drug use among middle school students were as follows:

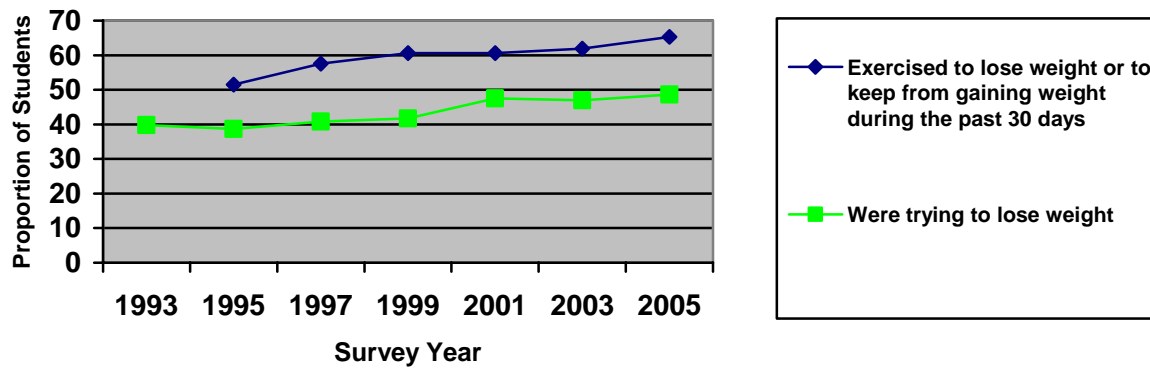
- First full drink before age 13 fell from 36.4 percent to 34 percent.
- First marijuana before age 13 dropped from 11.3 percent in 2001 to 9.9 percent in 2005.
- Current marijuana use declined from 9.8 percent in 2001 to 8.3 percent in 2005.
- Percentage of students believing there is great risk in occasional marijuana use increased from 49.9 percent in 2001 to 52.3 percent in 2005.

Significant Changes in Sexual Behaviors Among High School Students



The middle school survey did not include any questions in the Sexual Behaviors category.

Significant Changes in Weight Management and Dietary Behaviors Among High School Students

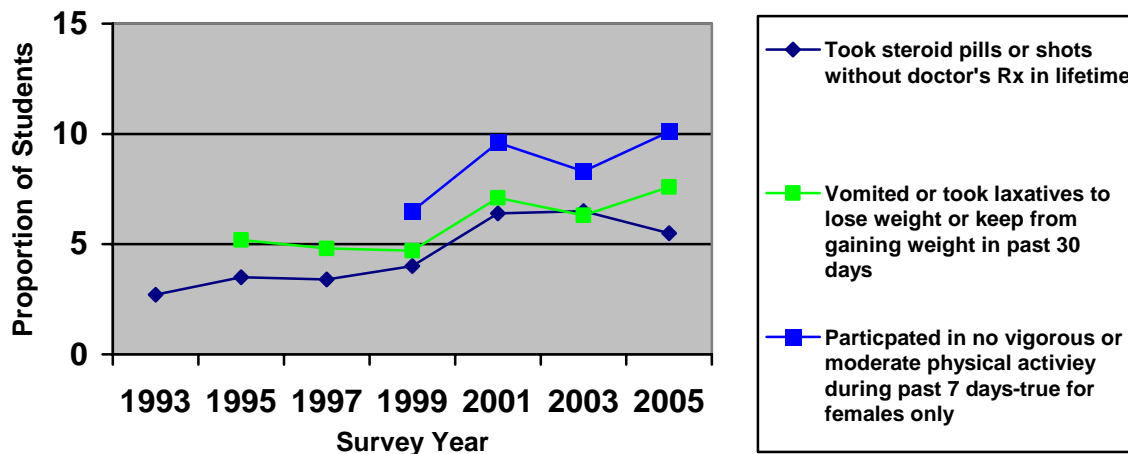


The question on exercising to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight was not included in the high school survey in 1993 and is still not a part of the middle school survey. At the middle school level, the percentage of students who were trying to lose weight increased from 44.9 percent in 2001 to 46.9 percent in 2005.

Areas of Increasing Risk

The CDC trend analysis also identified several behaviors reported by high school students where significant negative changes had occurred over time. One of these was in the area of other drug use, and three were in the area of weight management and dietary behaviors. Trend lines for three of these significant negative changes can be viewed in the next line graph. The fourth, which related to the percentage of students who ate green salad one or more times in the past seven days showed a significant decline from 72.2 percent in 1999 to 65.5 percent in 2005.

Significant Negative Changes in Drug Use, Weight Management, and Dietary Behaviors Among High School Students



Among middle school students, negative changes of approximately two or more percentage points were recorded for the following three questions in the area of injury and violence-related behaviors:

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2005</u>
• Only feel safe at school sometimes, rarely, or never	29.5%	26.9%	32.4%
• Ever belonged to a street gang	10.3%	11.5%	13.9%
• Felt depressed (sad/hopeless 2+ weeks)	27.1%	28.5%	29.3%
• Actually attempted suicide during past 12 months	11.9%	10.8%	12.5%
• Threatened/offended re: racial or ethnic background	23.7%	26.8%	27.7%

Unwelcome changes in the perception of risk associated with smoking and drugs were also recorded at the middle school level. The percentages of students who believe that people are at slight or no risk of harming themselves if they engage in the following behaviors increased as follows:

Slight or no risk if people

• smoke 1 or more packs of cigarettes per day.	14.6%	12.6%	15.6%
• use illegal drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamines.	9.9%	8.6%	10.6%

While middle school students were not asked questions about sexual behaviors, they were asked whether they had ever been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school. The percentage of middle school students responding that they had received such instruction fell from 61.8 percent in 2001 to 54.8 percent in 2005.

The final negative change for middle school students was in the area of dietary behaviors. The percentage of middle school students reporting that they drank 3 or more glasses of milk per day in the past week declined from 25.0 percent in 2001 to 20.5 percent in 2005. Female students were more at risk in this area, with only 16.8 percent of them reporting that they drank the recommended 3 or more glasses of milk per day compared with 25 percent of male students.

Short-Term Changes

In addition to the positive and negative changes in adolescent behaviors, a number of short-term changes, both positive and negative, were apparent between the 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey results and the results from the 2003 administration of the survey. The findings below and on the next page (listed sequentially by survey category) provide additional information regarding Nevada students' response to the 2005 YRBS by providing comparisons with 2003 YRBS results. Within each category, changes representing progress in health and safety behaviors that put Nevada youth at risk will be presented first, followed by changes that indicate backsliding.

Behaviors that Result in Unintentional and Intentional Injuries: The following improvements in reducing risk since the 2003 survey were apparent.

Among high school students:

- Always wearing a seatbelt increased from 44.2 percent to 48.3 percent
- Driving after drinking dropped from 11.1 percent to 10.4 percent.
- Past or present gang membership fell from 13.1 percent to 12.6 percent.
- Symptoms of depression in the past year dropped from 29.9 percent to 27.8 percent.

Among middle school students:

- Fighting at school dropped from 22.7 percent to 21.3 percent
- Being offended, threatened, frightened, or attacked at school because of their gender dropped from 13.9 percent to 12.9 percent.

Increased risk was apparent since the 2003 survey in the following behaviors.

Among high school students:

- Being offended, threatened, frightened, or attacked at school because of their racial or ethnic background increased from 19.6 percent to 20.7 percent.
- Fighting at school increased from 12.6 percent to 14.2 percent.

Among middle school students:

- Riding with a driver who had been drinking increased from 19.1 percent to 20.4 percent.
- Driving after drinking increased from 6.1 percent to 7.2 percent.
- Being offended, threatened, frightened, or attacked at school because of their racial or ethnic background increased from 26.8 percent to 27.7 percent.
- Carrying a weapon on school property increased from 5.1 percent to 5.8 percent.
- Being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property increased from 7.8 percent to 8.3 percent.
- Seriously considering suicide increased from 16.4 percent to 17.5 percent.

Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Drug Use: The following improvements in reducing risk since the 2003 survey were apparent.

Among high school students:

- Ever tried smoking dropped from 57.3 percent to 52 percent.
- Smoked first cigarette before age 13 fell from 18.8 percent to 16.1 percent.
- Current smoking declined from 19.6 percent to 18.3 percent.
- Lifetime use of alcohol dropped from 75.6 percent to 74.1 percent.
- Current alcohol use fell from 43.4 percent to 41.4 percent.
- Binge drinking dropped from 27.8 percent to 24.8 percent.
- Lifetime marijuana use plunged from 46.6 percent to 39.3 percent.

- First marijuana use before age 13 dipped from 12.4 percent to 12.3 percent.
- Current marijuana use dropped from 22.3 percent to 17.3 percent.
- Ever tried other illegal drugs such as heroin, hallucinogens, depressants, or tranquilizers fell from 15.0 percent to 12.5 percent.
- Ever took steroid pills or shots without a doctor's prescription dropped from 6.5 percent to 5.5 percent even through the trend analysis showed an overall increase since 1993.
- Ever took over-the-counter drugs to feel high fell from 16.0 percent to 14.1 percent.

Among middle school students:

- Lifetime alcohol use dropped from 49.7 percent to 48.3 percent.
- Lifetime marijuana use fell from 16.6 percent to 14.3 percent.
- Current inhalant use inched down from 11.2 percent to 11.1 percent.

Increased risk was apparent since the 2003 survey in the following behaviors.

Among high school students:

- Lifetime cocaine use increased from 10.9 percent to 11.1 percent.
- Current cocaine use rose from 4.4 percent to 5.4 percent.
- Lifetime inhalant use increased from 14.5 percent to 15.3 percent.
- Current inhalant use jumped from 3.9 percent to 6.3 percent.

Among middle school students:

- Binge drinking increased from 13.5 percent to 13.9 percent.
- Lifetime cocaine rose from 5.6 percent to 6.0 percent.
- Ever used over-the-counter drugs to feel high increase from 6.3 percent to 7.0 percent.

Sexual Behaviors and Health-Related Outcomes: There were no changes reported beyond the previous trend analysis, page iii graphic illustration.

Dietary Behaviors and Physical Activity: The following improvements in reducing risk since the 2003 survey were apparent.

Among high school students:

- Ate less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat to lose weight increased from 38 percent to 41 percent.
- Participated in vigorous physical activities for 20 or more minutes on 3 or more of the past 7 days increased from 66.6 percent to 67.5 percent.
- Participated in moderate physical activities for 30 or more minutes on 5 or more of the past 7 days increased from 27.2 percent to 28 percent.

For middle school students, there were no changes in this category beyond those reported in the trend analysis. No additional negative changes were recorded for middle or high school students.

Conclusion

The results of the 2005 administration of the YRBS suggest that progress is being made in reducing the prevalence of many of the behaviors that put Nevada youth at risk. Significant reductions are apparent in tobacco, alcohol, and drug use among both middle school and high school students along with decreases in some injury and violence-related behaviors and reduced prevalence of sexual activity among high school students. Areas of concern, where behaviors that put youth at risk have actually increased, include dietary behaviors and physical exercise.